



150 Years

Paris Commune

"Thus the Commune which the powers of the old world believed to be exterminated lives stronger than ever, and thus we may join you in the cry: Vive la Commune!"

Karl Marx; written on March 21, 1881 - MECW, Volume 25, page 373

On the 150th anniversary
of the Paris Commune.

18 March 1871 - 18 March 2021

The Paris Commune
illuminates the path of the world proletariat
towards revolution.

written by: Wolfgang Eggers

On the 150th anniversary, the world proletariat honours its Parisian heroines and heroes. The world proletariat has taken them deep into its heart forever. The heroism of the Paris workers is chiselled into the annals of the revolutionary class struggle of the international proletariat.

The Paris Communards were not great personalities whose charisma dazzles us. There was nothing outwardly special about the Paris Communards. They were simple, nameless workers, the driving force of the revolution.

In the history of the world proletarian movement, apart from the October Revolution, there is hardly an uprising of the proletariat of greater significance than the Paris Commune of 1871. It was the first serious attempt by the proletariat to create its own workers' government. In Paris the first dictatorship of the proletariat was established. And anyone who reduces the events in Paris to the history of France and denies their outstanding international importance in the history of the revolutionary struggle of the entire world proletariat cannot be called a Marxist, let alone a Stalinist-Hoxhaist.

At the centre of the lessons of the Paris Commune for us Stalinist-Hoxhaists is the question of world revolution. All problems relevant to the triumph of world socialist revolution are in one way or another linked to the Paris Commune. Although the conditions for the struggle of the world

proletariat have changed radically in the course of time and a blind copying of the experience of the Commune is quite out of place, the basic elements of this experience retain their universal significance for the whole period of the revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism. This is also how Lenin approached the question of the theory and tactics of the Paris Commune.

Communists around the world are more or less familiar with the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin on the Paris Commune. And if not, our Comintern (SH) archive provides extensive literature on this. Furthermore, I would like to refer at the outset to the article ["The Victory of the Paris Commune"](#), which I wrote in 2013 (in German) and to another article written in English language: ["On Karl Marx and the Paris Commune"](#).

We are Stalinist-Hoxhaists, and so we want to begin by letting Joseph Stalin and Enver Hoxha have their say about the Paris Commune in the context of the world revolution:

STALIN:

"Our proletarian revolution is the only revolution in the world which had the opportunity of showing the people not only political results but also material results. Of all workers' revolutions, we know only one which managed to achieve power.

That was the Paris Commune.

But it did not last long. True, it endeavored to smash the fetters of capitalism; but it did not have time enough to smash them, and still less to show the people the beneficial material results of revolution. Our revolution is the only one which not only smashed the fetters of capitalism and brought the people freedom, but also succeeded in creating the material conditions of a prosperous life for the people. Therein lies the strength and invincibility of our revolution." (Josif Stalin, Speech at the First All-union Conference of Stakhanovites. November 17, 1935)

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In that the Soviet form of state alone, by drawing the mass organizations of the toilers and exploited into constant and unrestricted participation in state administration, is capable of preparing the ground for the withering away of the state, which is one of the basic elements of the future stateless communist society.

The Republic of Soviets is thus the political form, so long sought and finally discovered, within the framework of which the economic emancipation of the proletariat, the complete victory of socialism, must be accomplished.

The Paris Commune was the embryo of this form; Soviet power is its development and culmination.

That is why Lenin says:

"The Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies is not only the form of a higher type of democratic institution . . . , but is the only [* My italics. -- J. St.] form capable of ensuring the most painless transition to socialism." (On the Foundations of Leninism, chapter on: Dictatorship of the Proletariat, 1924)

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To disarm the revolution without any guarantees that the enemies of the revolution will be disarmed —would that not be folly, would that not be a crime against the working class?

No, comrades, we do not want to repeat the mistakes of the Paris Communards. The Paris Communards were too lenient in dealing with the Versaillese, for which Marx rightly reproved them at the time. They had to pay for their leniency by tens of thousands of workers being shot by the Versaillese when Thiers entered Paris."

Stalin, Interview with Foreign Workers' Delegations - November 5, 1927

Enver Hoxha:

"The French Revolution, the Paris Commune and the October Socialist Revolution are no different than links in a single chain, links in the world revolution. We say this not only as international Marxist-Leninists, but also as Albanian communists." (Vol. 26, page 363, Albanian)

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"The Paris Commune was not victorious, it was suppressed, but it gave a great example to the world proletariat. Marx has said that its experience proved the temporary weakness of the French proletariat, but nevertheless prepared the proletariat of all countries for the world revolution and gave a great lesson as to what conditions are necessary for victory. Marx raised these great experiences of the "heaven strikers" of the Commune to theory and taught the proletariat that it must smash the bourgeois state apparatus and its dictatorship with revolutionary violence." (Imperialism and Revolution, page 301, German)

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"Karl Marx taught the Parisian heroic proletariat to 'storm the heaven' and raise the red flag of liberation in a situation when it was a minority against the great force of the French bourgeoisie, and in the face of the German army which had surrounded Paris." (Vol. 22, page 346, Albanian)

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"Why not let the masses decide, for example, the appointment of an accountant, a director, etc.? Such a practice is Marxist-Leninist and in line with the teachings of the Paris Commune, where all officials were elected by the masses." (Vol. 35, page 92, Albanian)

Here, then, let us mention concretely the teachings of Hoxhaism on the further development of workers' control under the conditions of capitalist-revisionist encirclement. We Stalinist-Hoxhaists want to transform workers' hegemonial decisions and control into a global system of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Worker's- Peasant's and Soldier's Soviets will be both elected or removed by the masses all over the world.

And it must also be stressed that Albania was the first country in the world to firmly enshrine the dictatorship of the proletariat in its constitution some 100 years after the Paris Commune.

Joseph Stalin and Enver Hoxha fought for half a century for the aims of the Paris Commune and put them brilliantly into practice. They developed the teachings of the Paris Commune, the teachings of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and raised them to a higher level. When we speak today of the doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat, we mean precisely the highest form of the dictatorship of the proletariat developed further by Stalinism-Hoxhaism, we mean the world dictatorship of the proletariat and not a return to the Paris Commune. This is what distinguishes us Stalinists-Hoxhaists from all other advocates of the Paris Commune.

With the victory of the October Revolution in 1917, the Paris Commune shone in new splendour, in the glory of the victory of Bolshevism in Russia. This renaissance of the Paris Commune, as it was brought back to life by the Bolsheviks, was of great world historical significance, for after the defeat of the Paris Commune, the international counterrevolution waged a decades-long cruel campaign of revenge. The revolutionary movement of the proletariat was brutally oppressed and guided into a harmless (reformist-class reconciliatory) channel. The bourgeoisie always had the upper hand over the proletariat and the lessons of the Paris Commune were in danger of being gradually forgotten. Lenin wrote on this in 1905:

"In the final analysis, force alone settles the great problems of political liberty and the class struggle, and it is our business to prepare and organise this force and to employ it actively, not only for defence, but also for attack. The long reign of political reaction in Europe, which has lasted almost uninterruptedly since the days of the Paris Commune, has too greatly accustomed us to the idea that action can proceed only "from below," has too greatly inured us to seeing only defensive struggles. We have now, undoubtedly, entered a new era: a period of political upheavals and revolutions has begun. In a period such as Russia is passing through at the present time, it is impermissible to confine ourselves to old, stereotyped formulae. We must propagate the idea of action from above, we must prepare for the most energetic, offensive action, and must study the conditions for and forms of such actions." (Lenin: [Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution](#); (2) What Can We Learn From the Resolution of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. on a Provisional Revolutionary Government? ; Volume 9)

A repetition of the proletarian revolution and its international extension had to be prevented by the international bourgeoisie with all means - not only with military means, but also with the weapon of bourgeois ideology and its hacks in the ranks of the workers' world movement.

The bourgeoisie had raised a whole army of opportunists to play down the importance of the Paris Commune for the proletarian revolution, to falsify the history of the Paris Commune and thus put it at the service of the bourgeoisie. In a spectrum ranging from the reformists and revisionists to the anarchists, the opportunists defended only that of the Paris Commune which served to maintain the power of the bourgeoisie, and at the same time opposed all those teachings of the Paris Commune which helped the proletarian class to the revolutionary conquest of its power. In short, the bourgeoisie does and did everything to erase forever the revolutionary spirit of the Paris Commune from the memory of the proletariat and to make it disappear behind a smokescreen of anti-communism.

And what is the world proletariat doing today ? The world proletariat is not clinging to letters and thus not blindly following the slogans of 1871. The world proletariat is putting forward its own clear and programmatic slogans of the 5 classics of Marxism-Leninism, which correspond to the present situation of globalisation. It was the great merit of Lenin that he transformed the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat of the Paris Commune into an international form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, namely the soviet system. The slogans of the dictatorship of the world proletariat are still derived from this today. We contrast our slogans of proletarian world democracy, the world soviet system, etc., with the democratic slogans of the dictatorship of the world bourgeoisie.

Even after 150 years, the world bourgeoisie and its opportunist lackeys have not succeeded in eradicating the lessons of the 5 classics of Marxism-Leninism about the Paris Commune. On the contrary. It is the Comintern (SH) that today defends the Paris Commune on the ground of Stalinism-Hoxhaism and shows the world proletariat the way to the world socialist revolution that began under the banner of the Paris Commune and will be led to world victory tomorrow under the banner of the Paris Commune. Just like all other classics of Marxism-Leninism, the Comintern (SH) is based on Karl Marx's fundamental teachings on the Paris Commune. The all-surpassing work ["Civil War in France"](#) remains the main work of Marxists all over the world on the teachings of the Paris Commune. The Comintern (SH) published this work in 23 languages.

And it was Lenin, after all, who turned the defeat of the Paris Commune into a victory with the October Revolution. It was the Bolsheviks who defended the teachings of the Paris Commune, the teachings of Marxism, against all kinds of right and "left" opportunists, not only in their own party, not only in Russia, but all over the world. The Bolsheviks, and no one else in the world, masterfully spread the ideas of the Paris Commune across the globe on Marxist-Leninist bases. This was of world-historical significance not only for the world communist movement, but also for the whole revolutionary development of the workers' world movement. Why? Lenin gives the answer to this, namely that the soviet system is not only a Russian form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, originating from the model of the Paris Commune, but has become an international form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And it is precisely this Leninist international form of the dictatorship of the proletariat to which the Comintern (SH) continues to adhere.

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The dictatorship of the proletariat began with the Paris Commune and was further deepened and consolidated by the dictatorship of the proletariat in Lenin's and Stalin's Soviet Union and in Enver Hoxha's Albania.

The necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a transitional phase from world capitalism to world communism is indispensable. Karl Marx taught this in ([Critique of the Gotha Programme](#)). The dictatorship of the proletariat as a transitional phase to world communism began in Paris and the dictatorship of the proletariat finds its end in world communism.

Therefore, it is the task of the Comintern (SH) to ensure the victory of the Paris Commune all over the world. We want to transform all the cities of the world into one Paris Commune. The task of the Comintern (SH) now is to lead the entire world proletariat to the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is the road ahead from the defeat of the Paris Commune to the victory of world socialist revolution, this is the world historical road of the dictatorship of the proletariat, illuminated in the light of Stalinism-Hoxhaism.

What was the Paris Commune ?

It was the first commune of the working class, the "Commune No. 1" . That is why we named our programme of the Comintern (SH) after the Paris Commune, namely as the programme of the ["World Commune No.1"](#). In our world programme, this reads as follows in the introduction:

"We are the pioneers and builders of the first WORLD COMMUNE !

The Comintern (SH) is therefore not only the leading organisation for the liberation of the world proletariat.

It is also the leading organisation for building the world commune.

We are the revolutionary world communards of the first world commune that exists in the world.

We are the world commune number one.

World communism is the doctrine of the conditions of the liberation of the world proletariat, the doctrine of the world commune, the doctrine of a classless world without exploitation and oppression."

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The Paris Commune was, is and remains the heroic harbinger of a new world society, the communist world society. The Paris Commune is the germinal form of a world commune to be created. Therein, and in nothing else, lies the whole significance of the 150th anniversary of the Paris Commune. We world communards continue the struggle that the Paris communards began 150 years ago. This is the historical destiny, the historical mission of the Comintern (SH). That is the quintessence of this article.

How could the defeat of the Paris Commune later be turned into a victory ? Through the leadership of a communist party ! In Paris, unfortunately, there was no communist party with a clear communist programme at the time. Marxism-Leninism teaches: the socialist revolution is doomed to failure if it is not led by a communist party. The communists in Russia and Albania learned the right lessons from the experience of the Paris Commune. There, the socialist revolution led to victory by means of the communist party. And so it is also primarily the Communist International that leads the world proletariat to the victory of the world socialist revolution. This is one of the most important lessons of the defeat of the Paris Commune. Already the First International drew the conclusion from the defeat of the Paris Commune that only a communist party can lead the socialist revolution, establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and create the classless society.

Furthermore, the socialist revolution is doomed to failure without a Red Army. This is another lesson the communists have learned from the defeat of the Paris Commune. The lesson of the Paris Commune is: the first condition for the dictatorship of the proletariat is the army of the proletariat. Without a red world army, the victory of the world socialist revolution is unthinkable.

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In 1903, when there was a split in the SDAPR between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, the Bolsheviks took a revolutionary stance on the Paris Commune, which they asserted against the opportunist stance of the Mensheviks in bitter struggles under the leadership of comrade Lenin. In 1908, Lenin wrote in his article "Lessons of the Commune":

"Although the socialist proletariat was split up into numerous sects, the Commune was a splendid example of the unanimity with which the proletariat was able to accomplish the democratic tasks which the bourgeoisie could only proclaim. Without any particularly complex legislation, in a simple, straightforward manner, the proletariat, which had seized power, carried out the democratisation of the social system, abolished the bureaucracy, and made all official posts elective.

But two mistakes destroyed the fruits of the splendid victory. The proletariat stopped half-way: instead of setting about "expropriating the expropriators", it allowed itself to be led astray by

dreams of establishing a higher justice in the country united by a common national task; such institutions as the banks, for example, were not taken over, and Proudhonist theories about a “just exchange”, etc., still prevailed among the socialists. The second mistake was excessive magnanimity on the part of the proletariat: instead of destroying its enemies it sought to exert moral influence on them; it underestimated the significance of direct military operations in civil war, and instead of launching a resolute offensive against Versailles that would have crowned its victory in Paris, it tarried and gave the Versailles government time to gather the dark forces and prepare for the blood-soaked week of May.

But despite all its mistakes the Commune was a superb example of the great proletarian movement of the nineteenth century. Marx set a high value on the historic significance of the Commune—if, during the treacherous attempt by the Versailles gang to seize the arms of the Paris proletariat, the workers had allowed themselves to be disarmed without a fight, the disastrous effect of the demoralisation, that this weakness would have caused in the proletarian movement, would have been far, far greater than the losses suffered by the working class in the battle to defend its arms. The sacrifices of the Commune, heavy as they were, are made up for by its significance for the general struggle of the proletariat: it stirred the socialist movement throughout Europe, it demonstrated the strength of civil war, it dispelled patriotic illusions, and destroyed the naïve belief in any efforts of the bourgeoisie for common national aims. The Commune taught the European proletariat to pose concretely the tasks of the socialist revolution.

The lesson learnt by the proletariat will not be forgotten. The working class will make use of it, as it has already done in Russia during the December uprising.

Mindful of the lessons of the Commune, it knew that the proletariat should not ignore peaceful methods of struggle—they serve its ordinary, day-to-day interests, they are necessary in periods of preparation for revolution—but it must never forget that in certain conditions the class struggle assumes the form of armed conflict and civil war; there are times when the interests of the proletariat call for ruthless extermination of its enemies in open armed clashes." (“Lessons of the Commune” published in *Zagranichnaya Gazeta* (Foreign Gazette), No. 2, March 23, 1908, Lenin, Volume 13)

On the eve of the October Revolution, when the task of seizing power was before the Russian proletariat, Lenin wrote ["State and the Revolution"](#), an unsurpassed analysis of the Commune's experience in smashing the military-bureaucratic machine of the bourgeoisie. Referring to the Paris Commune, Lenin subjected the reformist theses of Karl Kautsky to a devastating critique and refuted them completely in his work ["The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky"](#) (1918).

The struggle to defend the teachings of the Paris Commune in Russia was then successfully continued by [Lenin in the Comintern](#), i.e., on the international level, namely, in the struggle against the betrayal of the Paris Commune by the Second International.

And today it is the Comintern (SH) that defends the Marxist teachings of the Paris Commune against the betrayal of the revisionist Comintern leaders.

One of the most important lessons of Marxism about the Paris Commune is that the bourgeois state apparatus must not be taken over completely, but must be smashed completely by revolutionary violence. Instead of fighting for the implementation of this Marxist-Leninist principle, namely to smash the imperialist state system through the world socialist revolution, the Comintern, this most important organisation of the world proletariat in the struggle for its liberation, was dissolved.

The Paris Commune was the first proletarian revolution in the world and therefore not free of mistakes. In the extremely difficult conditions of 1871, its mistakes were understandable, but the betrayal of the Second International was by no means excusable, for by now it had full Marxist-Leninist knowledge of the mistakes of the Paris Commune and of the Marxist road and means of overcoming them. The leaders of the Second International instead continued the bourgeoisie's agitation against the First International for allegedly calling for "arson". The Second International accused the Bolsheviks of "red terror", "Blanquism", but unlike the Blanquists who, as is well known, were not guided by Marxism, not by proletarian socialism, the Bolsheviks relied on the revolutionary force of the working class and its ally, the peasants. And it was precisely the failure to include the poor peasants that contributed not only to the failure of the Paris Commune, but also later to the defeat of a number of other socialist revolutions.

That is why another international lesson from the Paris Commune is: without the globally organised rallying of the poor peasants, the world socialist revolution is doomed to failure.

Finally, the Paris Commune lacked sufficient solidarity support from the European proletariat. This was not only because the whole of European reaction prevented it. It was also because the level of development of the links within the European workers' movement was still weak at the time. Paris commune should have been formed simultaneously in all European countries to avert the defeat of the French proletariat. This is not to belittle the merits of the First International under the leadership of Karl Marx, which organised an excellent broad movement of solidarity of the proletarians of all countries with the Paris Commune and also had a direct guiding influence on the Paris Commune. But the civil war in France should not have stopped at the border. The civil war in France should have culminated in a European civil war against the entire European reaction. That would have been the only correct way to guarantee the victory of the Paris Commune. What does proletarian internationalism teach on the question of support for the Paris communards ? Proletarian internationalism is not exhausted in sympathy rallies and paper resolutions of solidarity. In such a revolutionary situation, in which the Parisian proletariat found itself, proletarian internationalism cannot ultimately be expressed in any other way than with proletarian arms in one's hands ! We do not want to forget that many revolutionaries from different countries took part directly in the struggle against Versailles, and even travelled to Paris to go to the barricades with arms in their hands. We also remember comrade Elizaveta Tomanovskaya, a member of the Russian section of the First International (known as Eliza Dmitrieva). She was a founding member and leader of the Women's Association for the Defence of Paris. She was in constant contact with Karl Marx and reported to him on the situation in Paris. And during the "May Week", Tomanovskaya and Louise Michel commanded a battalion of women who performed true miracles of courage. Mention should be made of A. V. Krukovskaya. She stayed in Paris from the autumn of 1870 and did extensive organisational and propaganda work. Together with her husband, Charles Victor Jacklard, she fought on the barricades. M. P. Sazhin (Armand Ross) also fought on the barricades; he came from Zurich as soon as he heard about the proclamation of the Commune. Another Russian revolutionary, V. A. Potapenko, was aide-de-camp to General Dabrowski, with whom he remained until the last minute. P. L. Lavrov, who had been living in Paris since the winter of 1870/71, supported the Commune wholeheartedly.

Other revolutionaries from Russia spread the following slogan in 1871: "The world revolution has begun and it will spread to all the capitals of the world." The Swiss section should also be commended for being the only section of the First International to send an armed detachment to France. And by sending international brigades into the Spanish Civil War, the Comintern had taken the first steps on the road to the creation of a Red World Army, to which the Comintern (SH) is committed today.

And also from this we Stalinist-Hoxhaists have to learn today, in that we have to prepare well the

world socialist revolution in all countries of the world with the revolutionary workers and organise centrally on a global scale (also militarily). This was also the reason why the October Revolution could not pass directly into the world socialist revolution and why the November Revolution in Germany did not internationalise. When the proletariat revolts in one country, proletarian internationalism dictates that the rebellion of the proletariat be kindled simultaneously in each of its own countries. The lesson for us Stalinist-Hoxhaists, then, is that unless you mobilise the entire world proletariat (at least the international industrial proletariat) into a united common action, you cannot lead the world socialist revolution to victory.

There are also a number of other factors that the Paris Commune lacked, but which were already present in the October Revolution, for example, communist propaganda. Few people know that in 1917-1918, in the big cities like Leningrad and Moscow, but also in the smallest village, the walls were covered with motifs of the Paris Commune and leaflets about the Paris Commune were distributed everywhere. We recall that the Comintern, though no longer under the leadership of the revisionist Dimitroff, had made great efforts to propagate the Paris Commune (Unfortunately, we do not yet have the book that the Comintern had published on the Paris Commune). What is clear, then, is:

Without Stalinist-Hoxhaist propaganda one cannot lead the world proletariat to the victory of the world socialist revolution. This is another lesson we must learn from the Paris Commune.

Our agitation and propaganda aims at highlighting the role and importance of the Paris Commune for the revolutionary struggle of the world proletariat today.

Already at the 5th World Congress of the Comintern, March 18 was proclaimed as a day of commemoration. And so the Comintern (SH) has also commemorated 18 March 1871 every year since its foundation. This year, however, is a very special year. We are currently carrying out an annual campaign for the 150th anniversary, for which the Comintern (SH) already adopted instructions on propaganda last year.

We have now published the largest collection of communist literature in the whole world on the theme of "Paris Commune" for the 150th anniversary in many languages. Our campaign also includes the publication of this article.

We call on all comrades to acquire basic knowledge about the Paris Commune. For orientation in studies, we mention here the 6 most important points:

1. socio-economic background of the Paris Commune (the main characteristics). Here, the industrial development of France, especially in the years 1852 - 1870, should be dealt with and compared with the general industrial revolution, for example in England, Germany and the USA. This applies above all to the associated intensification of capitalist exploitation and oppression of the working class by the bourgeoisie (economic situation and economic demands of the Parisian proletariat).

This also includes studying the role of the First International, which it played for the revolutionary development in France and especially for the Paris Commune. Here, the influence of the three different factions within the First International on the Paris Commune should be distinguished. And finally, the military background should also be explained, for example, answering the question of what influence the Franco-Prussian war had on the events in Paris and dealing with the question of the transformation of the war into civil war.

2. the date 4 September 1870: Paris revolution; workers proclaim the republic. Fall of the second empire. Takeover of power by the government of the bourgeois republicans.

The date 18 March 1871: the heroic revolutionary days in Paris, the causes of the failure of the Paris Commune, the development of the Parisian proletariat before, during and after the proletarian revolution.

4. the cruel crimes of the counter-revolution against the Paris communards. The "blood week" of the white terror. The subsequent black period of furious reaction throughout Europe. The solidarity among the communards and the necessity of the proletarian aid and solidarity organisations. The solidarity support of the First International to the Paris Communards who fled.

5. The significance of the Paris Commune for the October Revolution of 1917.

6. the significance of the Paris Commune for the Comintern, for the Comintern (SH), for the decisive battles of the world proletariat ahead.

Our propaganda is fundamentally concerned firstly with denouncing the global evil of bourgeois class society, secondly with emphasising the advantages of a globalised, socialist society and thirdly with awakening the consciousness of the proletariat for the revolutionary overthrow of the world bourgeoisie, for the conquest of the political power of the world proletariat and to enthuse it for world revolution.

Within the framework of this article it is of course not possible to list here all the other factors which are indispensable to create in order to draw the correct lessons from the defeat of the Paris Commune.

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The history of the proletarian International shows: With the defeat of the Paris Commune, the First International also ended, while with the victory of the October Revolution came the founding of the Communist International.

In the formation of the Comintern, which was inevitable in order to shake off the rotten Second International, the return to a revolutionary attitude to the Paris Commune, a return to Marxism, played a decisive role. It was about the most important question: either the dictatorship of the proletariat and soviet power or bourgeois democracy and parliamentarism. It was concretely about the question of whether the proletariat must take up arms for the realisation of its class interests or exchange them with its ballot paper. On this question, the Second International took a bourgeois, anti-Marxist stance.

Lenin said at the [1st World Congress of the Comintern](#) (1919):

The Paris Commune - to which all who parade as Socialists pay lip service (for they know that the workers ardently and sincerely sympathize with though Commune) —showed very clearly the historically conventional nature and limited value of the bourgeois parliamentary system and bourgeois democracy; institutions which, though highly progressive compared with medieval times, inevitably require a radical alteration in the era of proletarian revolution. It was Marx who best appraised the historical significance of the Commune. In his analysis, he revealed the exploiting nature of bourgeois democracy in the bourgeois parliamentary system under which the oppressed classes enjoy the right to decide once in several years which representative of the propertied classes shall "represent and suppress" (ver- und zertreten) the people in parliament. And it is now, when the Soviet movement is embracing the entire world and continuing the work of the Commune for all to see, that the traitors to socialism are forgetting the concrete experience and concrete lessons of

the Paris Commune and repeating the old bourgeois rubbish about “democracy in general”. The Commune was not a parliamentary institution.

The significance of the commune, furthermore, lies in the fact that it endeavored to crush, to smash to its very foundations, the bourgeois state apparatus, the bureaucratic, judicial, military and police machine, and to replace it by a self-governing, mass workers’ organization in which there was no division between legislative and executive power. All contemporary bourgeois-democratic republic’s, including the German republic—which the traitors to socialism, in mockery of the truth, describe as a proletarian republic—retain this state apparatus. We therefore again get quite clear confirmation of the point that shouting in defense of “democracy in general” is actually defense of the bourgeoisie and their privileges as exploiters.

The fundamental distinction between the dictatorship of the proletariat and a dictatorship of the other classes — landlord dictatorship in the Middle Ages and bourgeois dictatorship in all civilized capitalist countries — consists in the fact that the dictatorship of landowners and bourgeoisie was a forcible suppression of the resistance offered by the vast majority of the population, namely, the working people. In contrast, proletarian dictatorship is a forcible suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, i.e., of an insignificant minority the population, the landlords and capitalists. "

It was the strength of the Paris Commune that the proletariat no longer relied on the bourgeoisie but on its own forces - against the bourgeoisie. But it was the weakness of the Paris proletariat not yet to break away consistently enough from the influence of the bourgeoisie and to smash the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie completely.

But to pander to the bourgeoisie, the Social Democracy and the Social-Democratic International with a so-called People's Front policy of a Dimitroff, the pact with the bourgeoisie, that was betrayal of the Paris Commune, betrayal of the independent liberation struggle of the proletariat, that was the end of the struggle for the world socialist revolution, that was the death sentence on the Comintern. In contrast to the dissolution of the Comintern, the First International dissolved without having betrayed its communist aims and principles.

In the Comintern, there had never been any talk of armed revolution since the 7th World Congress. Immediately after the defeat of the Paris Commune, precisely in June 1871, the international bourgeoisie concentrated its struggle on smashing the First International. Not only was the General Council banned, but the members of the sections were arrested and put in prison, if they had not been murdered before. More members of the First International fell victim to the counter-revolution after the defeat of the Paris Commune than on the barricades in the days of March. But the members of the First International did not bow to the terror of the counter-revolution, but answered it by founding the Second International with Friedrich Engels at its head, one of the founding fathers of the First International and the closest comrade-in-arms of Karl Marx, the leader of the First International. The corpse of the Second International was buried with the founding of the Comintern.

And finally, with the betrayal of the revisionist Comintern leaders came the founding of the fascist anti-Comintern. The destruction and reconstruction of the proletarian International - until the final victory over the international counterrevolution, this has been the complicated historical process of development of the proletarian International. These repetitions of history were not accidental. Just as the foundation of the Comintern, the foundation of the Comintern (SH) had not been an accident, but the highest expression of the class struggle between the world proletariat and the world bourgeoisie. This is how we Stalinist-Hoxhaists see the historical connections between the proletarian International, the Paris Commune of 1871 and its 150th anniversary.

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One of the slogans of the opportunists is directly directed against the Paris Commune:

"One should not have taken up arms."

But there are moments in history when a desperate struggle of the masses, even for a hopeless cause, contributes significantly to the further training of these masses and their education for the next struggle.

In this Marxist sense, we must also reconsider the attitude of the Comintern and thus our own attitude on the question:

Would not the German proletariat have been just as obliged as the Paris Communards to take up arms to prevent Hitler's seizure of power, if by doing so it was possible to prevent the Second World War with its millions and millions of dead, the victims in the concentration camps, the distress and misery of the peoples who suffered under Hitler's fascism ? Should not the Comintern at least have attempted to take up world-wide proletarian arms and turn them against Hitler's fascism ? We ask: And even in case of defeat, would not this armed struggle of the German working class with the support of the Soviet Union and the entire world proletariat against Hitler's fascism contribute just as much to the further training of the masses and their education for the further forces as did the Paris Commune ? Would this not have brought us a step closer to the world socialist revolution ? Instead, the world revolution has been fought by the revisionists in the Comintern as "sectarianism" and disappeared into oblivion for decades? We ask: Why were the Marxist-Leninist teachings of the Paris Commune discarded by the Comintern at such a historical moment, when they should most urgently have been put into practice, in the struggle against Hitler's fascism ?

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The Paris Commune, its victories and defeats, produced a polarisation of all ideological and political currents that can be traced back to the 150th anniversary.

The revisionists, "left", anarchist and other elements are still trying to hijack the ideological heritage of the Commune on today's 150th anniversary.

Nothing has changed in the ideology of the worship of spontaneous action. The representatives of spontaneism were in the majority among the communards just as they are today. Let us not delude ourselves. The Marxists were in the minority then just as they are today. This was undoubtedly one of the main weaknesses of the Commune, which led to its downfall. And to this day, the dominant influence of the bourgeoisie and its anti-communist ideology within the international workers' movement over Marxist proletarians committed to the aims of the Paris communards is the life insurance policy for avoiding a globalised repeat of the Paris Commune. The bourgeoisie has feared and hated the Paris Commune from the revolutionary days of 1871 to the 150th anniversary. But it has since learned to hide its struggle against the danger of restoring the Paris Commune behind words of praise and to present itself to the working class as the only true defender of the Paris Commune. It is precisely for this purpose that the opportunists of all kinds are used by the bourgeoisie against us Stalinist-Hoxhaists, the only true defenders of the Paris Commune:

"For the Paris Commune in words - against the Paris Commune in deeds" This is the physiognomy of revisionism on the question of the Paris Commune.

This was valid not only for the modern revisionists at a time when the Marxist-Leninist World Movement of comrade Enver Hoxha was the only defender of the Paris Commune, but also at the

present time when we Stalinist-Hoxhaists defend the Paris Commune against the neo-revisionists. We say to workers all over the world: to bring the Paris Commune back to life requires violent socialist revolution, and not the peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism preached by the opportunists.

To this day, the anarchists' erroneous teachings about the Paris Commune are also widely disseminated. The anarchists fight the dictatorship of the proletariat and its main instrument, the proletarian state. They reject the state, whether it is bourgeois or proletarian. They deny the proletarian state, which is indispensable for the suppression of the bourgeoisie under the conditions of the class rule of the proletariat. Thus, the Bakunists declared that any involvement in political activity was a form of collaboration with the bourgeois state system. To them, the socialist order and the proletarian discipline and authority (hegemony) of the proletariat were alien. Anarchism, including its Bakuninist form, was a danger to the organised workers' movement even long before the Commune. For this, study the teachings of Marx and Engels on anarchism, especially Bakunism. The anarchists showed their true face in the days when the Paris Communards were building their organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was further shown in 1921 with the mutiny in Kronstadt, it is shown today in the organisation of the anti-fascist movement. Under the particular conditions of the different countries, different anarchist currents also emerged, some of them mutually exclusive, especially on the central question of the abolition of the state.

The social base on which anarchism drew and exerted influence at the time of the Paris Commune included urban petty-bourgeois elements, artisans impoverished by capitalist development, semi-proletarians and lumpenproletarians, as well as declassed upper-class people. The spontaneist actions of the anarchists also attracted elements of the intelligentsia, especially among the youth.

There were and are the most diverse ideological currents among the anarchists, from Bakunism to anarcho-syndicalism to the "councillor-communists", anarcho-"communists", and a small anarchist grouping later even approached Stalin and Enver Hoxha. This is not surprising, because already at the time of the First International, the Bakunists abused it to push through their anarchist aims. In doing so, they played their divisive game against the Marxists in the First International together with the reformists, Blanquists, Proudhonists and Trade-Unionists, who were also represented in the First International. Furthermore, there is nothing surprising in the fact that this whole range of ideological currents on the Paris barricades was also reflected in the First International. Moreover, there were both supporters and opponents of the Paris Commune in the First International (rather in a covert form, but sometimes even in an open form by certain elements among the English Trade Unionists). All these opposing ideological currents, attitudes and views on the Paris Commune came to be polarised in the crucial organisational question of the centralist organisation of the proletariat through a political party and through a proletarian state, on the one side, and as opposed to it, the disorganisation of the proletariat through various decentralised models of federalist and purely trade union forms of organisation. The intention was to transform the First International into a loose association of autonomous sections. The anarchist dogma of negating authority as a form of relationship between society and the individual was transformed into negation of the need for a unified organisation with central governing bodies. But all these attempts failed. It is mainly thanks to the persistent and principled struggle of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels that the Marxist position prevailed in the First International and drew the right conclusions from the defeat of the Paris Commune. An unrelenting struggle against anarchism and reformism, against "left" and right opportunism, created the conditions for the triumph of Marxism in the workers' movement.

Let's sum up:

What are the most important lessons that the international proletariat must learn from the struggles of the communards on the 150th anniversary?

First, that the proletariat cannot take over the bourgeois state apparatus and democratically transform it into the proletarian state apparatus, but that the proletarian revolution must smash the bourgeois state and replace it with the proletarian apparatus of power, with the councils, which are the deciding and executive organs of the working class.

Secondly, that the proletariat must ruthlessly, brutally crush the bourgeoisie, disarm its troops, raise its own armed power, because if given only a few days to rally, organise, arm, the bourgeoisie will use its power ruthlessly and take cruelly bloody revenge on the working people who register their claims as a class.

Thirdly, that the antagonism of the different nations completely disappears even in war, when it is necessary to put down in revolutionary civil war the common enemy of the revolutionary proletariat, the international counter-revolution.

With these lessons it must become clear to every worker that we can do nothing for the liberation of the working class from its present misery and oppression if we do not follow the example of the Commune and the Russian October Revolution and take up the struggle for the elimination of the bourgeois state, for the state power of the councils of workers and toiling peasants.

Let us show that the Commune lives in our hearts, that no violence will prevent us from taking the next step towards world proletarian revolution, towards the world commune.

Long live the 150th anniversary of the Paris Commune !

Long live proletarian internationalism !

Long live the world socialist revolution !

Long live Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism-Hoxhaism !

Long live the world commune No.1 - the Comintern (SH) !

13. March, 2021

Wolfgang Eggers

Comintern (SH)



[special website ...](#)

"Long live the Paris Commune !"

This slogan will resound thunderously

anew, in the struggle for justice,

then the chains will break,

then the dead will be avenged.

And as the dawn of freedom

the flag, the red flag, will fly again.

Long live the Paris Commune !